

HEGEL AND STIRNER: THESIS AND ANTITHESIS

LAWRENCE S. STEPELEVICH

The recent profusion of studies directed to uncovering the "Young. Marx" has also provoked so me renewed interest in his contemporary, Johann Caspar Schmidt (1806-1856), better known as Max Stirner. With a few exceptions, the most important being William Brazill's *The Young Hegelians*, Stirner has been retained in his traditional role as Marx's first critic, the harried "Sankt Max" of *The German Ideology*. This perspective, established firmly by Sidney Hook and continued by David McLellen, does cast light upon Marx's development, but it cannot be expected to do justice to Stirner, who is more than a mere anti-Marxist.

Since the recovery and popularization of his work just before the turn of the century, a small but undaunted group calling themselves "individualistic anarchists" have claimed Stirner as their mentor. However, they have largely ignored the philosophical aspects of his thought in favor of its possible political consequences. This expected ignorance is the cause of those one-dimensional anarchist sketches of Stirner, such as drawn by John Henry Mackay or Benjamin R. Tucker, which are usually more inventive than representational. Nevertheless, it was mainly through their singular devotion to the anarchistic implications of Stirner's major work, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*, which has accounted for its appearance in eight languages and over fifty complete editions. Still, the continued interest evoked by Stirner's teachings, even when limited to defending anarchism or providing fodder for Marxian scholars, suggests that these teachings have a firm metaphysical grounding. Indeed, there is no reason not to anticipate a metaphysical basis for his thought, for Stirner had fully studied Hegelian philosophy. But, up until the present time, the philosophic relationship holding between Stirner and Hegel has been left virtually unexplored. To continue to leave this nexus unexamined not only leaves a wide gap in the history of ideas, but it also fails to do justice to Stirner's philosophic significance as well as to Hegel's philosophic influence. It will then be the intention of this paper to institute the examination of the relationship holding between the famous Hegel and his notorious disciple, Max Stirner.

Unlike a later generation of Hegelians, a generation which included Marx, Engels, and Bakunin, Stirner had the advantage of being taught his Hegel by Hegel. Moreover, he was introduced to Hegelianism even before encountering Hegel as his teacher. During his years as a gymnasium student in Beyreuth from 1819 to 1826, Stirner had as a teacher Georg Andreas Gabler, one of Hegel's first disciples. As Hegel's student in the Nürnberg Gymnasium and then at the University of Jena, Gabler's dedication was finally rewarded in 1835, when he was appointed to fill Hegel's vacated chair at the University of Berlin. Although it seems possible, it is not known if Stirner ever met Hegel directly, but he did hear the most important of his lectures. In the spring of 1827, during his first year at the University of Berlin, Stirner attended Hegel's lectures on the Philosophy of Religion. In the following winter semester, Stirner enrolled for two of Hegel's courses, the History of Philosophy and the Philosophy of Spirit. Unfortunately, Stirner left no record of his impressions of these famous lectures.

In the fall of 1828, just as Feuerbach before him, Stirner left Berlin for the University of Erlangen. But unlike Feuerbach, Stirner returned to Berlin within a few years, there to spend the rest of his obscure life caught up in a series of personal and professional mishaps. In the fall of 1841, Stirner joined an informal circle of radical Young Hegelian teachers, poets, and publicists who bravely called themselves the "Free Ones." In this prerevolutionary group, which had

evolved from Marx's "Doctor's Club," Stirner soon became acquainted with the young Engels, and developed a deep friendship with Bruno Bauer. The lifelong friendship of Stirner and Bauer, at least in respect to its intellectual form, was a perfect Hegelian union—one grounded in mutual criticism.

They first met in the spring of 1842, when Bauer returned to Berlin after a short and sensational career at the University of Bonn. Bauer had been suspended from teaching by reason of his outspoken atheism, and as he returned "with an aureole of martyrdom about his forehead," he easily established himself as a spiritual leader of the Berlin Young Hegelians.

Bauer had, within five years, traversed the theological-philosophical path from an orthodox and theistic Hegelianism to an extreme form of critical atheism. The end of his speculative journey from theism to atheism was suddenly revealed with the publication, in June of 1841, of his most significant work, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte der Synoptiker*. Within a year he also settled accounts with Hegelian philosophy in his critical study, *Hegels Lehre von der Religion und Kunst*. In the eyes of conservative Hegelians and orthodox theologians, Bauer's ideological inversion was a double tragedy; not only had the dangerous Hegelians of the left gained a powerful thinker, but the conservatives had lost, in him, one of their most promising young champions. In his early career, with the support of the Prussian Minister of Culture, von Altenstein, as well as the conservative Hegelian faculty at the University of Berlin, Bauer had been the first chosen to rebut Strauss' masterwork, the *Leben Jesu*. Later, his further competence in regard to Hegelianism was recognized when he was elected to prepare the second edition of Hegel's lectures on the Philosophy of Religion. And so, if Stirner fell under the influence of Bauer, as Karl Lowith maintains, then he had most certainly found a brilliant tutor. As their contemporary Rosenkranz noted, "Among the so called 'free-thinkers' in Berlin, Bruno Bauer is undoubtedly the most important, in character as in culture and talent." Moses Hess was of the same opinion: "He [Bauer] stood at the head of the Young Hegelians." Then again, it might have been Bauer who found a tutor in his older companion, as William Brazill suggests, II and in easy opposition to Rosenkranz and Hess, there is the judgment of Friedrich Engels. In a letter to Marx announcing the publication of Stirner's *Der Einzige*, Engels was obviously not displeased with the work of his "duzbruder" who "had obviously, among the 'Free Ones,' the most talent, independence, and diligence." But this question of influence can be left unresolved, for, in any case, Stirner could certainly say, with much more justification than Marx, that he also "had come to know Hegel and most of the Hegelians as well."

Having now touched upon Stirner's apparent knowledge of Hegelianism or at least of his many opportunities to gain that knowledge but before proceeding to compare some of their fundamental views, a brief examination of Stirner's literary style and production might serve as a further introduction to their relationship.

The most evident fact regarding Stirner's literary career is that he was, unlike so many Young Hegelians, neither prolific nor precocious. Whereas Engels, in a properly Victorian manner, started his shelf of lengthy works before he was twenty, and David F. Strauss was only twenty-seven when his sensational *Leben Jesu* appeared, Stirner was already in his late thirties before his writings were published. This belated career began with a series of letters and essays appearing in the more liberal journals and newspapers of prerevolutionary Germany: *Gutzkow's Telegraph für Deutschland*, the same which introduced a pre-Marxian Engels to its readership, and the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*, known as a vehicle for the Young Hegelians. Stirner also wrote a few articles for the *Rheinische Zeitung*, though before Marx became its official editor.

But these early writings, as well as those which followed upon the publication of *Der Einzige*, can now only serve as a frame for that work, being of interest to a few devoted Stirnerians at best. Nevertheless, with some exceptions, these lesser writings reflect Stirner's stylistic élan, an ease of expression seldom encountered in philosophic literature. The earliest remark upon his style, made by Marx's one-time friend, Arnold Ruge, was that Stirner was responsible for "the first readable book in philosophy that Germany has produced." This early praise of Stirner's skill has found its most recent echo in the words of R. W. K. Paterson:

Der Einzige is compulsively readable. . . . His style, direct, vivid, and economical, has a terseness and candour which cuts like a new knife through the turgid and obscure verbosity which characterized so much of the writing of his neo-Hegelian predecessors.

Certainly, one can question Paterson's final judgment that Stirner was "a linguistic adventurer unique in the history of German philosophy," or the evaluation of the American literary critic James Hunneker, who set Stirner above Nietzsche in respect to style, or Martin Buber's comparison of Stirner to Kierkegaard, but, in any case, Stirner is in no way a literary "Hegelian." His style does not share in that "wanton obscurity" which John Findlay sees cloaking the "tortuous intricacies" of Hegel's writings.

Both Hegel, and an earlier metaphysician, Duns Scotus, set a final seal upon their respective philosophical traditions with a language grown so precise and artificial that it was unable to lend itself to literal conciseness, even were it not coupled with the far-reaching intentions of their philosophies. And so, by reasons of both style and a bent for metaphysical comprehensiveness, Hegel as well as Scotus left his philosophic posterity a number of thick volumes and a profusion of lecture notes, all requiring an exhausting exegesis. On the other hand, suggestive of a doctrine that avoided transcendent aims and extensive visions, Stirner has, in effect, left only one work, *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum*. But this work was not lightly composed, and its careful construction was once commented upon by Stirner, who remarked that it was "the arduous work of the best years" of his life. In sum, Stirner was not a prolific writer, but he wrote in a lucid manner. Hegel was prolific, but he wrote in a manner which can only be described as necessarily difficult. If the form of language reflects that of thought, then the minds of Stirner and Hegel rest at antipodes.

Since the general inclination of metaphysical language, at least in the traditions of both Medieval Scholasticism and German Idealism, is to become ever more complex to the point of unintelligibility, Stirner's direct style never served as an inducement to take his philosophy seriously. On the other hand, it did lend itself to providing the striking maxim, the *schlagwort* prized by the political activist. His work fell under the notorious ownership of the anarchists and was praised as "a veritable breviary of destruction." In time, a *Stirnerbrevier* was prepared for the ready consultation of the faithful. Can a *Hegelbrevier* be imagined?

The first to label Stirner as an anarchist was Friedrich Engels, in his influential but misleading essay of 1881, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy*. In this, Engels not only declared Stirner to be an anarchist, but significantly placed him last in the line of Hegel's progeny: "Finally came Stirner, the prophet of contemporary anarchism-Bakunin has taken a great deal from him-and capped the sovereign 'self-consciousness' by his sovereign ego." For our purpose, what is here of interest is that Engels plainly understood Stirner to be the last ideological heir of that particular "left-wing" branch of

Hegelianism earlier founded by David F. Strauss. Franz Mehring naturally echoes Engels in designating Stirner as "the last offshoot of Hegelian philosophy." In a similar vein, the German scholar Kurt Mautz describes Stirner as "the last metamorphosis of German Idealism." And for that matter, even Stirner saw himself as the final Hegelian. But to place Stirner in this terminal role, to view him, as Henri Avron does, as "le dernier maillon de la chaîne hégélienne," is, according to the common understanding of Hegel's dialectical rules, to establish Stirner as the Anti-Hegel. Indeed, "Anti-Hegel" is the exact title accorded to Stirner by a historian of German philosophy, Victor Basch. In the course of a lengthy study of Stirner's political thought he concluded that "Stirner est l' Anti-Hegel: c'est donc là ce qu'il faut avoir sans cesse devant les yeux quand on le lit et qu'on le juge."

These judgments add an unexpected dimension to Stirner which presses his role far beyond that of being merely an actor upon the stage of early Marxism, or of being the ominous "pere du nihilisme," and sets him into a vital opposition with a powerful metaphysician.

However, but not unexpectedly, this delicate theme of metaphysical inversion, of Stirner as the Anti-Hegel, is seldom heard in the debates over his political or ethical significance. One of the few who does understand Stirner's doctrine to be the final dialectical term of Hegelianism is Karl Lowith, but he has only touched upon the topic:

Stirner's book ... has usually been considered the anarchic product of an eccentric, but it is in reality an ultimate logical consequence of Hegel's historical system, which-allegorically displaced-it reproduces exactly.

Mutatis mutandis, Wilhelm Windelband is of the same opinion: "Stirner is related to Feuerbach as Feuerbach is to Hegel: he draws the conclusion which would completely invert the premises." George Woodcock, the historian of Anarchism, concisely repeats the judgment of Windelband: "Max Stirner . . . proceeded from Hegelianism to its almost complete inversion." Finally, the most recent statement of Stirner's antithetical relationship to Hegel remains essentially the same as that made by Victor Basch over a half century ago. A young German writer, Rudolf Hirsch, concluded that "Although he had adopted much of the style and terminology of Hegel, Stirner was the only Anti-Hegelian [Nicht-Hegelianer] in Hegel's school." Certainly, in perfect accord with its own rules of development, the Hegelian school not only could but would create an Anti-Hegel, a Nicht-Hegelianer out of its own substance, and Max Stirner was this final product.

Space does not here permit, although the full proof of our thesis might require, that a point by point elaboration be made of the antithetical oppositions holding between Hegel and his last disciple. But it is possible and necessary to set forth briefly their respective attitudes in regard to two central and related metaphysical issues, issues which serve as the original impetus of their consequent thought.

Now, although Hegel insistently claims his system to be without a starting point or beginning, and, as Walter Kaufmann notes, he "keeps comparing his philosophy to a circle and says in effect with T. S. Eliot: 'In my beginning is my end ... ' " there are, nevertheless, two evident points which do indeed serve to institute his thought. These two interrelated points, when contradicted, perform the same introductory role for Stirner's doctrines.

The first point is that famous principle of logical priority, Hegel's notion of pure Being [reine Sein] which "makes a beginning" as the very first moment of that first triad of Being-

Nothing-Becoming, upon which he consequently grounds his metaphysics. This "beginning" will find its antithesis in Stirner's employment of Nothing as the first moment of his thought. Hegel's pure Being is negated to become the pure Nothing of Stirner's teachings. This is the first point of difference. The second point upon which Hegel and Stirner are in opposition is on the matter of the historical beginning of philosophy. For Hegel, as it will be seen, philosophy commences with the institution of the Eleatic school, whose most recent exemplar is Spinoza. For Stirner, the beginning of a realistic worldview entails the rejection of all forms of "Idealism," such as the notions that reason rules reality or that formal definitions are more real than the object so defined. And so, the system that Hegel praises as beginning philosophy, Stirner condemns as the first and most fundamental assault upon the power of his mind, the attempt of ideas to control their creator.

Now, it should here be noted that, for Hegel, these two points, the logical beginning of philosophy in the unmediated notion of Being, and the beginning of philosophy in Eleatic monism, are but two aspects of the same first principle. As he was careful to observe:

It is sufficient to mention here, that logic begins where the proper history of philosophy begins. Philosophy began in the Eleatic school, especially with Parmenides. Parmenides, who conceives the absolute as Being, says that "Being alone is and Nothing is not." Such was the true starting-point of philosophy, which is always knowledge by thought: and here for the first time we find pure thought seized and made an object to itself.

Let us begin the philosophical comparison of Hegel and Stirner by citing the well-known passage in Hegel's Logic where Being is set as the abstract starting point of his system:

Pure Being makes the beginning: because it is on the one hand pure thought, and on the other immediacy itself, simple and indeterminate; and the first beginning cannot be mediated by anything, or be further determined.

However, because mere abstract Being, considered precisely as a beginning, is the acknowledgment of a yet undetermined reality, the reflective mind is led immediately to consider it as indistinguishable from Nothing. This Hegelian Nothing is not the substantialized Nichts of Heidegger, but only the second moment in the passage of thought from the empty concept of Being to its final goal in the fullness of Absolute Knowledge.

In a less technical manner, at least verbally, Stirner reverses the procedure of Hegel and begins with the notion of Nothing, a Nothing from which Being will issue. The Nichts of Stirner rests, as does Hegel's Sein, upon the threshold of determinate reality, but it is not the weakened and reversed image of Being that Hegel leaves in the path of the Geist, but the primary creative source of reality itself.

This fundamental metaphysical approach is shared by none of the other Young Hegelians, although by definition they placed varying degrees of emphasis upon the constructive aspect of negation, what a latter-day Young Hegelian Herbert Marcuse would label "the power of negative thinking." Their joint criticisms, from Bauer's "terrorism of pure theory" to Marx's "revolutionary ... 'practical critical' activity," are only the diverse interpretations of a principle which Stirner fully revealed and applied, the principle that Negation is determination. But again, this Nothing of Stirner is not the universalized and substantialized Nichts of

Heidegger nor Hegel's abstract Nothing, but the individualized and unique negation at one with Stirner's ego, his "schöpferische Nichts, " the "creative Nothing."

Stirner literally begins and ends *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum* with his attention focused upon the subject of Nothingness. The first line of his work, which serves as the title to its brief and spirited Preface, is the first line of Goethe's poem *Vanitas! Vanitatum Vanitas!*-"Ich hab' Mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt" ("I have set my cause upon Nothing"). This same parody of Luther closed the work. And so, the whole work is suspended and conditioned upon this declaration of the priority of Nothing. On the final page of the Preface, in a peroration upon the repeating theme that the causes and concerns of others are of no interest to him, Stirner states his conception of Nothing:

I am no Nothing in the sense of emptiness, but I am the creative Nothing, the Nothing out of which I myself as Creator create Everything. [Ich bin nicht Nichts im Sinne der Leerheit, sondern das schöpferische Nichts, das Nichts, aus welchem Ich selbst als Schöpfer Alles schaffe.]

The same principle of creation *ex nihilo*, expressed in ethical applications throughout the work, is repeated once again in the final sentences of *Der Einzige*:

I am owner of my might, and I am so when I know myself as unique. In the unique one the owner himself returns into his creative Nothing, of which he is born If I concern myself for myself, the unique one, then my concern rests on its transitory, mortal creator, who consumes himself, and I may say:

I have set my cause upon Nothing.

[Eigner bin Ich meiner Gewalt, und Ich bin es dann, wenn Ich Mich als Einzigen weiss. Im Einzigen kehrt selbst der Eigner in sein schöpferisches Nichts zurück, aus welchem er geboren wird. . . . Stell' Ich auf Mich, den Einzigen, meine Sache, dann steht sie auf dem Vergänglichem, dem sterblichen Schöpfer seiner, der sich selbst verzehrt, und Ich darf sagen:

Ich hab' mein' Sach' auf Nichts gestellt.]

This Nothing upon which Stirner grounds his unique and exclusive being has its metaphysical ancestor in Spinoza's "negatio." In the perspective of this metaphysic, finite or limited being is particularized and set over against Absolute Substance by reason of its essentially negative character. Insofar as "determinatio negatio est," determinate being can pass only into absoluteness, into Being as Substance, through an act of self-destruction, through the negation of its own negativity. The echo of Spinoza is heard in Hegel when he decides that "The particular has its own role to play in world history; it is finite, and must, as such, perish." Stirner, as Nietzsche after him, was well aware of these philosophical calls to suicide and sacrifice, and was just as scornful in rejecting them. Stirner's immediate self-determination, the willful establishment of his own exclusiveness, requires that he directly declare himself to be "Nothing." He had elected the only option available to defend his individuality within the context of the Spinozistic Hegelian metaphysic: the assertion of his essential negativity. Stirner's declaration of his own creative nothingness, which he carefully distinguishes from a merely passive emptiness, is the only essential and proper attribute that a

finite being could claim within the metaphysical context of a system which had negation as the principle of determination.

As it was earlier noted, in Hegelianism, the question regarding the metaphysical priority of Being or its opposite is one that leads directly to the issue of when man's philosophic enterprise began. As an example, Hegel touches upon the doctrines of the Eleatics in the course of his discussion upon that abstract Being which "makes a beginning." Now, as the history of philosophy properly commences with the Eleatic school, and as Spinoza's idea of Being "is just what τὸ ὄν was to the Eleatics," Hegel sees Spinoza as the essential initiator of philosophy. Spinoza's teachings are the final historical refinement of what the Eleatic school had initiated: the grounding of philosophy in the thought of the One Substance. Hence, Hegel has the highest praise for Spinoza:

Thought must begin by placing itself at the standpoint of Spinozism; to be a follower of Spinoza is the essential commencement of all Philosophy ... when man begins to philosophize, the soul must commence by bathing in this ether of the One Substance, in which all that man has held as true has disappeared; this negation of all that is particular, to which every philosopher must have come, is the liberation of the mind and its absolute foundation.

It is precisely this "negation of all that is particular" that Stirner rejects, and along with it the "liberation of the mind [die Befreiung des Geistes]," a mind which could not belong to Stirner. However, shortly before Hegel had arrived at this moment of high praise for Spinoza, he had introduced him as a representative of Oriental thought:

The dualism of the Cartesian system Spinoza, as a Jew, altogether set aside. For the profound unity of his philosophy as it found expression in Europe, his manifestation of Spirit as the identity of the finite and the infinite in God, instead of God's appearing related to these as a Third—all this is an echo from Eastern lands. The Oriental theory [morgenländische Anschauung] of absolute identity was brought by Spinoza much more directly into line, firstly with the current of European thought, and then with the European and Cartesian philosophy, in which it soon found a place.

From the above, it appears that Hegel viewed Spinozism as the fruit of Oriental thought, marking both the commencement of philosophy as well as initiating a metaphysics of absolute identity. Stirner agrees with Hegel that Oriental ideology, or in his terms "Mongoloidity" or "Chineseness," is indeed the remote source and theoretical foundation of speculative philosophy. It is, however, the basis of most human misery. To Stirner, the mongoloid frame of mind encourages first a worried and then a worshipful assent to a capricious domination of the ideal order. The idea of the absolute, generated in the passive mind of the Oriental, reappears in myriad forms all threatening to individual autonomy, forms such as God, Mankind, Man, or the State. Even "Freedom" itself, the latest divinity to serve, is but another manifestation of the absolute. According to Stirner, these ideals exist only so long as they are tolerated by the individual in whose mind they appear. The Hegelian Geist, as well as Spinoza's God, are not the creators but the creatures of Hegel and Spinoza.

A few citations can illustrate Stirner's attitude regarding the Oriental initiation of a philosophy of absolute identity and its consequent release of the Geist. These citations are drawn from that section of *Der Einzige* which investigates the ideology of the era immediately

prior to Stirner, and it stands in the same order to Stirner's history of thought as Hegel's discussion of Spinoza stands in his History of Philosophy.

The history of the world ... seems till now to have run through two Caucasian ages, in the first of which we had to work out and work off our innate negroidity; this was followed in the second by Mongoloidity (Chineseness), which must likewise be terribly made an end of. Negroidity represents antiquity, the time of dependence on things ... Mongoloidity the time of dependence on thoughts, the Christian time. Reserved for the future are the words, "I am owner of the world of things, and I am owner of the world of mind."

The distinctive triadic pattern of Hegel is evidenced, the pattern upon which both Moses Hess and August von Cieszkowski had earlier stretched the course of history. Insofar as he employs the triad to articulate history, and looks forward to a future of independency, Stirner is very much the Young Hegelian.

The Mongoloid era has reached its fruition in Christianity, a religion in which static ideality as eternity has reached its apotheosis, and in which reason is enshrined in a timeless metaphysics. Both the Heaven and God of the Christian, as well as the immutable substances and timeless spiritual values of the speculative philosopher, have their roots in the passivity of the Oriental Mind.

For Stirner, and here the reader is reminded of Nietzsche, the only escape from this Mongolian bondage is to be found in the cultivation of a true Caucasian consciousness:

If Mongoldom has settled the existence of spiritual beings-if it has created a world of spirits, a heaven-the Caucasians have wrestled for thousands of years with these spiritual beings, to get to the bottom of them. What were they doing, then, but building on Mongolian ground? They have not built on sand, but in the air; they have wrestled with Mongolism, stormed the Mongolian heaven, Tien. When will they at last annihilate this heaven? When will they at last become really- Caucasians, and find themselves? When will the "immortality of the soul," which in the se latter days thought it was giving itself still more security if it presented itself as "immortality of mind," at last change to the "mortality of mind?"

And so, all of the practical "heaven-storming" activity of the young Hegelians, as well as that theoretical shadow of Christianity, Hegel's " Unsterblichkeit des Geists, " are but decaying Mongolian fantasies, ripe for replacement with Stirner's new teaching: the "mortality of mind."

Stirner's antithetical relationship to Hegel has been indicated but hardly substantiated by the brief discussion of their differing attitudes regarding the logical and historical inception of philosophy, their notions of Being and Nothing, of Spinozism and Mongolism. Still, it is enough at present even to have entertained their comparison as a serious possibility, for Stirner is a largely unknown figure in the history of thought. He is no Karl Marx.

At the outset of this paper, it was noted that recent scholarship directed to comprehending the "Young Marx" was certainly responsible for a mild renewal of interest in Stirner. However, even in this, as witnessed in a large number of Marxian studies, Stirner's name is seldom mentioned and when it is, a discussion of his thought seldom follows. It would seem that Marxian scholars have forgotten that Marx directed a massive criticism against Stirner, The German Ideology. Indeed, there had been a mystery as to why Marx, with some

help from Engels, embarked upon that exhausting work so shortly after having apparently settled his accounts with the other Young Hegelians in *The Holy Family*. The mystery was recently solved through the scholarly efforts of Nicholas Lobkowitz. In this matter, it is best to let him speak for himself:

We can put what we have just said in another and simpler way. Hegel had idealized the existing world. His disciples from Strauss to Marx felt forced to translate Hegel's idealizing description of the world into a language of ideals to be achieved. In the course of this development they also tried to concretize Hegel's abstract idealizations by translating talk about religion into talk about mankind, talk about the state into talk about existing bourgeois society, etc. Stirner might be described, and in any case was understood by Marx as the man who made the final step in this development—a step which leads beyond Hegelian idealism and negates it. For Stirner achieved the final concretization of Hegelianism by reducing all Hegelian categories to the naked individual self; he denounced not only a certain type of ideal, but all ideals whatsoever.

This citation, unavoidably lengthy, further supports the main thesis of this paper: that as Stirner's thought represents the final dialectical inversion of Hegelianism, Stirner, of all the Young Hegelians, fully deserves the title "Anti-Hegel."

Karl Marx, who paid Stirner the subtle compliment of criticism, would likely agree with both thesis and title.

Villanova University